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The U.S. election system has safeguards. But human nature is a vulnerability

By D.KLEPPER/C.A.CASSIDY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hacking a local election system in the United States wouldn't be easy, and secretly altering votes on a scale massive enough to change the outcome of the presidential race would be impossible, election officials have said, thanks to decentralized systems, paper records for nearly all ballots, exhaustive reviews, legal due process and decades of work by American election officials, volunteers and citizens.

But foreign actors and domestic extremist groups looking to meddle in next week's election can target a much weaker link: voters' perceptions and emotions. Those intent on undermining confidence in U.S. democracy don't have to change any votes if they can convince enough Americans not to trust the outcome.



Voting machines are prepared for use on Election Day at the Allegheny County Elections Division warehouse, Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2024, in Pittsburgh.

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Associated Press

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The U.S. election system has safeguards. But human nature is a vulnerability

Continued from Front

It's a possible scenario particularly concerning to intelligence analysts and officials tasked with protecting America's election: An adversary tries to hack a state or local election system and then releases a document — perhaps a fake one or even material that is publicly available — and suggests it's evidence of vote rigging.

Or, a video is crafted showing someone supposedly hacking into a ballot scanner, voting machine or a state voter registration system. But it hasn't happened, and it would not be true.

It's called a perception hack, which may or may not include an actual breach of voting systems but is made to appear that has happened. In some cases, minor information might be stolen — enough for a video to appear legitimate — but it does not change votes. A related threat involves fake footage supposedly depicting election workers destroying ballots.

In either case, the goal is the same: to generate confusion, distrust and fear.

Governments at all levels have worked to strengthen election infrastructure in recent years. The human brain, however, remains hard to defend.

"I think that's almost certain to happen," former CIA political analyst Adam Darrah said when discussing the risk of perception hacks.

Darrah, now vice president of intelligence at the cybersecurity company ZeroFox, said misleading people into thinking election systems are vulnerable is a lot easier than actually hacking into them. "It's a way to induce panic. We are very technically resilient."

Our emotional resilience, our



Allegeny County Elections Division Manager David Voye demonstrates a voting machine used to process paper ballots at polling places at the Allegeny County Elections Division warehouse, Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2024, in Pittsburgh.

Associated Press

hypersensitivity, that's still a challenge."

Narrow margins of victory or delays in vote counting could heighten the risk that a perception hack could fool a large number of voters, further polarizing the electorate, raising the risk of political violence and potentially complicating the transfer of power in January.

Intelligence officials warned last week that Russia and Iran may consider encouraging violent protests in the U.S. following the election. The nation's intelligence community and private analysts agree that while the Kremlin is backing former President Donald Trump, Moscow's ultimate goal is to divide Americans and undermine U.S. support for Ukraine and the NATO alliance.

America's adversaries focus on disinformation in part, officials say, because they understand the country's election infrastructure is too secure to hack successfully. Despite the findings of intelligence officials, both Russia and Iran have rejected claims that they are seeking to influence the U.S. election.

"We have never interfered, we are not interfering, and we do not intend to interfere," a spokesman for the Russian Embassy in Washington wrote in an email to The Associated Press.

Even without a foreign power's involvement, isolated stories of long lines at the polls, ballot mix-ups or other irregularities could be held up as proof that elections can't be trusted.

It happened in 2020, when Trump amplified claims about election problems, helping lead to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by his supporters trying to disrupt certification of the election.

The former Republican president has spent months laying the groundwork to challenge the results of this year's election if he loses. And he has worked to convince his supporters that the only way he can lose is if Democrats cheat, urging them to deliver a victory "too big to rig."

"They cheat," Trump said at a Michigan rally last month. "That's the only way we're going to lose, because they cheat. They cheat like hell."

Just as in 2020, the days immediately after the election are likely to be the most critical, as results are announced and Americans come to the end of a contentious race. It's then that authoritarian nations or domestic anti-democratic groups will look to whip up distrust in an effort to spur people into action, said Paul Barrett, a New York University law professor who studies online discourse and polarization.

In response, national security and election officials across the country have moved to expose disinformation and quickly knock down rumors. Top intelligence officials have held multiple briefings outlining foreign threats, while cybersecurity and election officials have explained why election systems are secure.

Last week, a video purporting to show someone destroying mail ballots in Pennsylvania began spreading on social media. Bipartisan election officials in Bucks County quickly debunked the video, and intelligence officials linked it to a Russian campaign behind other vid-

eos seeking to smear Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee, and her running mate, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz.

"That video was debunked pretty quickly on multiple news sites, and I know that Bucks County immediately got out in front of it and basically explained why it was a fake and why voters should have confidence," said Kim Wyman, former secretary of state in Washington state who also has worked at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

"But the problem is — now it exists out there," she said. "And we know that it will continue to be circulated between now and probably Inauguration Day."

Americans can help prevent a successful perception hack by not spreading election hoaxes any further. Disinformation experts urge voters to consult a variety of sources of information, be skeptical of anonymous social media claims and turn to their own state and local officials for the facts.

Uncertainty and emotions will be running high in the days after voting ends — exactly the conditions foreign adversaries and domestic extremists need to undermine trust.

"Our foreign adversaries are looking to attack our democratic process to further their own objectives, and we need the help of all Americans in ensuring they are not successful," said CISA senior adviser Cait Conley. "Americans should be confident that their votes will be counted as cast. They should also know that our foreign adversaries will try to make them believe otherwise."

"We encourage everyone to remain vigilant, verify the information they consume, and rely on trusted sources like their state and local election officials," she added. □

'Obamacare' enrollment opens, as Republicans threaten the health insurance program used by millions

By AMANDA SEITZ

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Americans can start signing up Friday for health care coverage offered through the Affordable Care Act marketplace for 2025, days before a presidential election that could threaten eligibility and raise costs for millions of those in the program.

The future of 'Obamacare' has emerged as a key issue in the closing days of the presidential campaign, with a top GOP leader promising this week to overhaul the program should Republican Donald Trump win the presidency.

Billions of dollars in tax credits are also at stake. Established during the COVID-19 pandemic, the money has expanded eligibility for millions of Americans, made health insurance coverage more affordable for many and dramatically boosted enrollment.

Nearly all of the 21 million people in the program have benefited from those subsidies, which expire next year, the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra speaks in Sacramento, Calif., Oct. 29, 2024.

Associated Press

Xavier Becerra said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"Americans can actually look at health care not as a privilege, but now as a right," said Becerra, who is going to the political swing state of Arizona on Friday to mark the beginning of open enrollment. "I don't think anyone wants to

have a right yanked away from them to have affordable health insurance coverage."

But significant changes to the program are almost certain if Trump wins the White House and Republicans take control of Congress in Tuesday's contentious elections. They are threatening to scale back

"Obamacare," a signature achievement of former President Barack Obama, a Democrat.

On Monday, a key Trump ally, House Speaker Mike Johnson, declared "No Obamacare" during a Pennsylvania campaign stop, promising "massive reform" under a Trump presidency with a Republi-

can-controlled Congress.

"Health care reform's going to be a big part of the agenda," Johnson said in a video first obtained by NBC News.

Johnson's office later issued a statement saying that he had no plans to completely repeal the landmark legislation, but the comments still underscored how Johnson is working closely with Trump to potentially remake the federal government and its social programs if Republicans sweep into power.

Trump has only said that he has "concepts of a plan" to change the Affordable Care Act, which he was unable to successfully scuttle altogether during his previous term in office. In recent months, Republicans have raised concerns about spending and fraud.

Enrollment under the Biden administration surged, after years of declines during the Trump administration, dropping to a low of 11 million on Trump's watch. But taxpayers have had to pour billions of dollars more into the Affordable Care Act to achieve that increase. □

Pentagon audit says Boeing cleaned up on Air Force parts, including soap dispensers marked up 8,000%

By TARA COPP and DAVID KOENIG

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Boeing overcharged the Air Force nearly \$1 million for spare parts on C-17 cargo

planes, including an 8,000% markup for simple lavatory soap dispensers, according to the Pentagon's inspector general.

The Defense Department's auditor reviewed prices

paid for 46 spare parts on the C-17 from 2018 to 2022 and found that 12 were overpriced and nine seemed reasonably priced. It couldn't determine the fairness of prices on the other 25 items.

The Office of the Inspector General said it reviewed the soap dispenser prices after getting a hotline tip. Boeing disputed the findings.

"We are reviewing the report, which appears to be based on an inapt comparison of the prices paid for parts that meet aircraft and contract specifications and designs versus basic commercial items that would not be qualified or approved for use on the C-17," Boeing said in a statement. "We will con-

tinue to work with the OIG and the U.S. Air Force to provide a detailed written response to the report in the coming days."

The C-17 Globemaster is one of the military's largest cargo aircraft. It can carry multiple military vehicles, large pallets of humanitarian supplies or, in extreme circumstances, hundreds of people. The Air Force flew C-17s nonstop for two weeks during the hectic August 2021 withdrawal from Afghanistan, evacuating more than 120,000 civilians fleeing the Taliban.

Since 2011, the U.S. government has awarded Boeing more than \$30 billion in contracts to purchase needed spare parts for the C-17 and be reimbursed by the Air Force.

Boeing is still trying to recover from financial and reputational damage caused by two deadly crashes in 2018 and 2019 of its best-selling airline jet, the 737 Max. This has been a particularly volatile year for the aerospace giant. It came under renewed scrutiny and federal investigations after a door plug flew off a 737 Max during an Alaska Airlines flight in January. Federal regulators limited Boeing production of the plane.

In July, Boeing agreed to plead guilty to a felony count of conspiracy to defraud the government for misleading regulators who approved pilot training rules for the Max. That plea deal is pending before a federal judge in Texas. □



A United States Air Force C-17 cargo plane loaded with humanitarian aid lands at Camilo Daza airport in Cucuta, Colombia, on Feb. 16, 2019.

Associated Press

L.A. County sues Pepsi, Coca-Cola over plastic bottles

By JAIMIE DING

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Los Angeles County is taking on Pepsi and Coke for their role in plastic pollution.

In a lawsuit filed Wednesday, the county alleged PepsiCo and Coca-Cola companies have misled the public about the recyclability of their plastic bottles and downplayed the negative environmental and health impacts of plastic disposal.

"Coke and Pepsi need to stop the deception and take responsibility for the plastic pollution problems your products are causing," LA County supervisor Lindsey Horvath said in a statement. "Los Angeles County will continue to address the serious environmental impacts caused by companies engaging in misleading and unfair business practices."

Coca-Cola owns brands like Dasani, Fanta, Sprite, Vitamin Water, and Smartwater, while PepsiCo owns Gatorade, Aquafina, Mountain Dew, and more. The two companies have been ranked as the world's top plastic polluters for five consecutive years, and Coca-Cola has taken the number one spot for six years, according to global environmental group Break Free From Plastic.

PepsiCo produces approximately 2.5 million metric tons of plastic and Coca-Cola produces approximately



A Coca-Cola sign is shown in San Francisco, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2020.

3.224 million metric tons of plastic annually, according to Break Free from Plastic.

A European Union consumer protection group and environmental organizations filed a legal complaint against Coca-Cola, Nestle, and Danone last November, accusing them of being misleading when representing packaging as 100% recycled or 100% recyclable. The LA lawsuit said Coca-Cola and PepsiCo have employed "disinformation campaigns" for consumers to purchase single-use plastic, believing them to be recyclable and less harmful to the environment. It alleged that both

companies promised to create a "circular economy" for its bottles, in which plastic bottles can be recycled and reused an endless number of times, while in reality plastic bottles can only be recycled once, if at all. The American Beverage Association, which PepsiCo and Coca-Cola are a part of, denied the lawsuit's accusations about their plastic bottle recycling labels. "The allegation that our packaging is not and will not be recycled is simply not true," the group's spokesperson William Dermody said in a statement.

Dermody said California had a 71% bottle recycling rate

in 2023, one of the highest in the country, and that their bottles are "designed to be recycled and remade and can include up to 100% recycled plastic."

In 2022 alone, an estimated 121,324 to 179,656 tons of plastic waste leaked into the land and ocean in California, and plastics make up seven of the top 10 litter products found on beaches, the lawsuit states.

A big part of the problem is microplastics.

Plastics that have leaked into the environment eventually disintegrate into tiny pieces of plastic measuring five millimeters or less. They can af-

fect soil and plant growth, marine and fish life, and are nearly impossible to remove from the environment, the lawsuit states.

Some Australian researchers, on behalf of the World Wildlife Fund, calculated in 2019 that many people each week consume roughly 5 grams of plastic from common food and beverages, and microplastics have been found in body tissues and organs. Though research is still limited overall, there are growing concerns that microplastics in the body could potentially be linked to heart disease, Alzheimer's and dementia, and other problems. The lawsuit is seeking a court order to stop the companies' "unfair and deceptive business practices" as well as restitution for consumers and civil penalties of up to \$2,500 per violation.

In February 2020, environmental nonprofit Earth Island Institute filed a lawsuit in California asking for damages and an order for Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Nestle USA, Procter & Gamble and six other companies to clean up the plastic waste they should be held responsible for.

New York state also sued PepsiCo last November for its role in creating the plastic waste that littering the Buffalo River, which empties into Lake Erie and supplies the city of Buffalo's drinking water. □



Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders speaks after taking the oath of office, Jan. 10, 2023, in Little Rock, Ark.

Associated Press

By ANDREW DeMILLO
Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Arkansas has purchased land for \$2.95 million to build a new prison that officials hope will ease a backlog of state inmates in county

jails, Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders and corrections officials announced Thursday.

The state announced it had purchased 815 acres (330 hectares) in Charleston, located about 106 miles (170

Arkansas purchases 815 acres of land for nearly \$3 million to build new prison

kilometers) northwest of Little Rock. The state Board of Corrections must approve the prison site before construction can begin.

"This new facility will help end our failed system of catch-and-early-release, and protect our communities by keeping violent offenders off our streets," Sanders said in a news release. "For Charleston, Franklin County, and the River Valley, it will offer hundreds of permanent, recession-proof jobs and millions of dollars in investment." Prison officials have not given a total estimate on how much the new prison will

cost or when they hope to begin construction. Sanders, a Republican, called for 3,000 new prison beds and lawmakers set aside \$330 million for that last year. An additional \$75 million that was originally intended for the expansion of a prison unit is also available for the project. About 2,500 state inmates are currently housed in county jails.

Corrections officials said that once the new prison is built, it will employ nearly 800 people at an average salary of more than \$46,600. "I have been proud to work with Governor Sanders to address the longstanding

issues facing our corrections system and am grateful for her bold action to tackle Arkansas' prison bed shortage with this new facility," Arkansas Board of Corrections Chairman Benny Magness said in a statement. "This facility demonstrates all our commitment to building a better prison system and a safer state."

Sanders last year signed changes to the state's sentencing laws that eliminated parole eligibility for certain violent offenses. Critics have said the changes could further burden an already overcrowded prison system. □

Waves of rocket fire from Lebanon hit Israel, killing 7 in deadliest strikes since Israeli invasion

By MELANIE LIDMAN, JULIA FRANKEL and FADI TAWIL

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP)— Rocket barrages fired from Lebanon killed seven people in northern Israel on Thursday, authorities said, hitting agricultural areas along the border and near the city of Haifa in back-to-back attacks that represented the deadliest spate of strikes from Lebanon since the Israeli military invaded the country earlier this month.

The violence came as top U.S. diplomats were in the region to push for cease-fires in Lebanon and Gaza, hoping to wind down the wars in the Middle East in the Biden administration's final months. Pressure has been building ahead of the U.S. election next week.

Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group has been firing thousands of rockets, drones and missiles into Israel, and drawing fierce Israeli retaliatory strikes, in the year since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack out of the Gaza Strip triggered Israel's invasion and bombardment of the Palestinian enclave. Both Hezbollah and Hamas are backed by Iran, Israel's regional adversary. Hezbollah did not immediately claim responsibility for Thursday's rocket fire.

The conflict along Israel's northern border escalated into a full-blown war last month, when Israel launched a wave of heavy airstrikes across Lebanon that killed Hezbollah's top leader, Has-



Displaced children, who fled Baalbek city and the nearby towns of Douris and Ain Bourday with their families amid the ongoing Hezbollah-Israel war, are reflected in a mirror inside a school being used as a shelter, in Deir Al-Ahmar, east Lebanon, Thursday, Oct. 31, 2024.

Associated Press

san Nasrallah, and most of his deputies. Israeli ground forces pushed into southern Lebanon on Oct. 1. Over the past year, the broadening Israeli campaign against Hezbollah has killed 2,800 people in Lebanon, wounded nearly 13,000 and devastated Lebanese towns near the border. Some 1.2 million people in Lebanon have been displaced since Israel's escalation in September. Hezbollah's intensified rocket attacks into Israel have forced 60,000 Israelis to evacuate from communities near the border. Over a year into the war, they remain displaced. On Thursday, projectiles from

Lebanon crashed into an agricultural area in Metula, Israel's northernmost town, killing four foreign workers and an Israeli farmer in the deadliest such attack since Israel launched its ground invasion. The residents of Metula evacuated in October 2023, and only security officials and agricultural workers remain. The Hotline for Refugees and Migrants, an Israeli organization that advocates for foreign workers, said authorities had put them in danger by allowing them to work along the border without proper protection.

Hours later, the Israeli military reported another volley of

some 25 rockets crossing into Israel from Lebanon, striking an olive grove in a suburb of the northern port city of Haifa.

Thursday's second barrage killed a 30-year-old man and 60-year-old woman, reported Magen David Adom, Israel's main emergency medical organization, and wounded two others. Israeli media reported that the victims had gathered to harvest olives at the time of the attack.

Agricultural areas along Israel's border, where much of the country's orchards are located, are closed military zones patrolled by Israeli troops that can only

be entered with official permission. For the few residents remaining in the area, the thump of missile interceptions by Israel's Iron Dome aerial defense system and the constant wailing of sirens warning of incoming rocket fire punctuate daily life.

Nonetheless, local officials in Israel largely support continuing a ground operation in southern Lebanon.

Amos Hochstein, a special adviser to President Biden on the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, has been pushing for a cease-fire deal to address the fighting with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"If the Israeli government will accede to an agreement that was brought by Amos Hochstein ... we will not have it because for us this is rehabilitating Hezbollah again on our borders,"

said Eitan Davidi, the mayor of the northern town of Margaliot where air raid sirens sounded repeatedly Thursday. "Hezbollah is firing towards civilians and farmers and hit innocent farmers that are working in the field." Hezbollah's newly named top leader, Sheikh Naim Kassem, said in a video statement Wednesday that the militant group will keep fighting Israel until it is offered cease-fire terms it deems acceptable.

He said it has recovered from a series of setbacks in recent months, including attacks using explosive pagers and walkie-talkies that was widely blamed on Israel. □

Gas explosion in southern Russia kills 5 people and injures another 4

MOSCOW (AP)— A gas explosion in a residential building in southern Russia on Thursday killed five people and injured another four, local emergency officials said.

The blast occurred early in the morning in the city of Cherkessk in the Karachay-Cherkessia region, which borders Georgia, about 1300 kilometers (800 miles) south of Moscow. The explosion severely damaged two upper stories of a five-story residential building, the emergency officials said, and the building could crumble even further.

Russian law enforcement has launched a criminal probe, suspecting safety violations. Gas explosions in residential buildings are fairly common in Russia.

In August, a gas explosion destroyed a section of a five-story residential building in the Ural Mountains, killing 11 people. At the time, the Russian state news agency Tass reported that between the beginning of 2022 and Aug. 1, 2024, at least seven such explosions occurred, killing a total of over 50 people. □



In this photo released by Russian Emergency Ministry Press Service on Thursday, Oct. 31, 2024, Russian Emergency Ministry rescuers carry a wounded person from the side of the rocked by a gas blast a five-story apartment building in Russia's North Caucasus city of Cherkessk.

Associated Press

Uganda struggles to feed more than 1.7 million refugees as international support dwindles

By PATRICK ONEN

Associated Press

RWAMWANJA, Uganda

(AP) — For months, Agnes Bulaba, a Congolese refugee in Uganda, has had to get by without the food rations she once depended on. Her children scavenge among local communities for whatever they can find to eat.

"As a woman who's not married, life is hard," Bulaba told The Associated Press. Some locals "keep throwing stones at us, but we just want to feed our kids and buy them some clothes," said the mother of six, who often works as a prostitute to fend for her family.

Uganda is home to more than 1.7 million refugees, the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, according to the United Nations refugee agency. Despite being renowned for welcoming those fleeing neighboring violence, Ugandan officials and humanitarians say dwindling international support coupled with high numbers of refugees have put much pressure on host



U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Filippo Grandi, third left, gestures as he talks with refugees at Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement in Kamwenge District, Uganda, on Oct. 21, 2024.

Associated Press

communities.

Approximately 10,000 new arrivals enter Uganda each month, according to U.N. figures.

Some have recently fled the war in Sudan, but most are from neighboring South Sudan and Congo.

Bulaba is among tens of

thousands in Rwamwanja, a refugee settlement in southwestern Uganda. As in other settlements across the east African country, refugees there are given small plots of land to cultivate as they are slowly weaned off total dependence on humanitarian

food rations.

Since 2021, as funding consistently declined, the U.N.'s World Food Program has prioritized the most vulnerable groups for food assistance, in food items or cash, which can be as little as \$3. After spending three months in Uganda, refu-

gees are eligible to get 60% rations, and the number falls by half after six months. Only new arrivals get 100% food assistance, leaving the vast majority of some 99,000 refugees in Bulaba's settlement vulnerable to hunger and other impoverishment.

In 2017, the Ugandan government and the U.N. held a summit in Kampala, the capital, and appealed for \$8 billion to deal with the sharp influx of refugees from South Sudan at the time. Only \$350 million was pledged.

Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, visited Uganda last week in a trip partly aimed to underscore the funding shortage.

The international community "should not take Uganda's generosity and the global public good it provides for granted," Grandi said in a statement at the end of his visit.

"Services here are overstretched. Natural resources are limited, and financial support is not keeping pace with the needs." □

Argentina's president fires his foreign minister after vote in favor of ending U.S. embargo on Cuba

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Argentina's

President Javier Milei on Wednesday dismissed his foreign affairs minister hours after the country voted in favor of lifting the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba at the U.N. General Assembly.

Argentine Foreign Minister Diana Mondino was replaced by Argentina's ambassador to the U.S., Gerardo Werthein, Milei's spokesman Manuel Adorni said on his X account.

Adorni didn't elaborate on the reasons behind the replacement, but the announcement came hours after Argentina voted Wednesday in favor of ending the embargo of Cuba. The President's office later confirmed in a press release that the dismissal was

because of the vote at the U.N.

"Our country is categorically opposed to the Cuban dictatorship, and it will remain firm in promoting a foreign policy that

condemns all regimes that perpetuate the violation of human rights and individual freedoms," Milei's office said.

On Wednesday, 187 nations, including Argentina,

voted in favor of a U.N. resolution condemning the U.S. embargo of Cuba, with only the United States and Israel voting against it.

Since taking power in December 2023, libertarian Milei has veered his country's foreign policy to be more aligned toward the U.S. and Israel interests.

Milei has expressed his total support of right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government over its bombardment and invasion of Gaza. His stand differs from most of Latin America where Bolivia and Colombia have even severed ties with Israel and at least five countries in the region, including Brazil, have pulled ambassadors from Tel Aviv. Argentina's vote at the U.N. is the latest episode of a troubled period



Argentine Foreign Minister Diana Mondino arrives at a ceremony marking the 30th anniversary of the bombing of the AMIA Jewish center that killed 85 people in Buenos Aires, Argentina, July 18, 2024.

Associated Press

of Mondino as Foreign Relations minister.

Last week, Mondino's office removed a press release after writing "Falklands" instead of "Malvinas," as the Argentina calls the British-controlled archipelago in the South Atlantic.

And in May, she traveled to China trying to improve the bilateral relations after some criticism from Milei of the Asian giant. But during her visit she was criticized because in a media interview she said that "all Chinese look like the same," referring to their physical features.

Milei's office also said that his government will do an internal audit at the Foreign Relations Ministry "with the aim of identifying promoters of agendas opposed to freedom." □

Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey

of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Ayo

Ajo, or Ayo, is a word with Arawak-Indian origin. A (or Ha) is an Indo-Antillean generalizing word. If you were to change a part of the word "Ayo", namely 'Yo', to 'Yu' and

make 'Ayu', it would mean "white."

However, as we now know, the name of the neighborhood is 'Ayo'. The word 'Yo' stands for Yocahu, which is another word for 'creator' in Arawak/Taino and in the Papiamento spoken today, 'Ayo' means 'bye'.

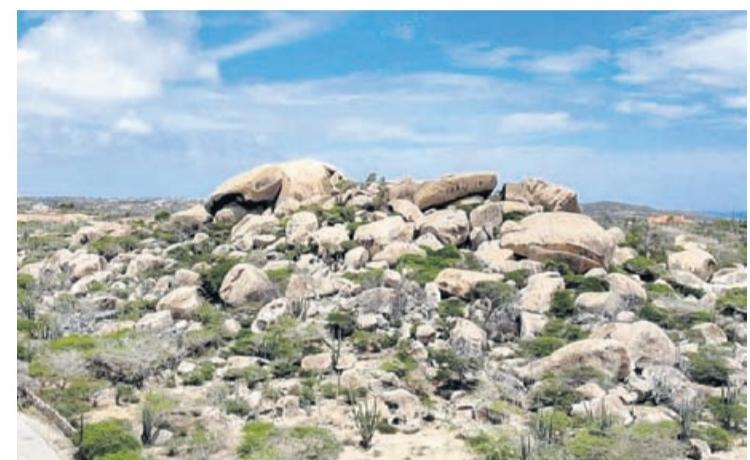
At Ayo, you can find some of the most well known rock formations. These formations became a well loved and visited attraction at Aruba that is held in high regards by both tourists and locals alike.

If you'd like to know more about the rock formations at Ayo, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all about its location and history.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; A.

Alto Vista

This word combination can be roughly translated to a 'high point of view' and the neighborhood received this name from the Hill.



In the surrounding areas, Domingo Antonia Silvestre built his by his own means the very first chapel or church of Aruba. The walls of this church were made with rocks but the roof was made of dry corn stalks. The church was inaugurated by father Pablo Algemesi

If you'd like to know more about the Alto Vista Church's beautiful history, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all you need to know about it for when you visit it.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; AV.



(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the streets of Barquissimo. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box, made from mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingilingi box."

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.

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Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's

Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to hitchhike, the man saw a car approaching, appearing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he thought the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the win-



dow and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.

Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they

realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat in our car when we were pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass contributes a lot to our culture of folkloric story-telling. □

Source: visitaruba.com

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals



(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they

have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □

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Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Coming Soon: El Patio Tacos & Tequila

Craving a late-night snack? We got you covered!

(Oranjestad)—After a night out it's custom to grab yourself a late-night snack on the road. Here in Aruba, there are dozens of food trucks that you can visit to enjoy a late-night bite. Here are a few that can be found in the down town/hotel area.

Chalo burger



Chalo burger is a favorite among locals, and it's due to its popularity that it has branched out to different parts on the island. One of its main locations is in Palm Beach, near the hotel area. Chalo offers a variety of fast-food meals, like hamburgers, hotdogs, loaded fries and more! A popular dish among locals is the Salchipapa: loaded fries with sausages, cheese and a mix of sweet and savory sauce.



Perfect for those late-night cravings!

Chalo is open Wednesdays through Mondays from 7pm to 12 am (Fridays till 1am), and is located at Palm Beach 178 (a little past the roundabout near the Piazza Gianni's). Other Locations include Tanki Leendert and Savaneta.

Julio's Corner

Situated in a nice little corner off the highway, Julio's Corner has a huge menu comprised of different



dishes and snacks, all made with a Venezuelan twist! From arepa's to chicken wings, to pizzas and burgers, Julio's Corner has it all to satisfy your taste! Editor's choice for what to get at Julio's Corner is the quesadilla, which comes with a side of fries.

Julio's Corner is open Mondays through Saturday from 6pm to 2am (Fridays and Saturdays up to 4am), and is located in the parking lot of the Eagle Bowling Palace, right on the other side of the road from the Sasaki gas station.

Habibi Express

Habibi Express is a Lebanese food truck stand, one of very few food trucks on the island to sell Mediterranean food. Located right at the entrance of The Local Market near the cruise ship port, here you can fill your stomach (and heart) with a



variety of options like shawarmas, doners, kapsalons and more, all 100% halal. When asked, the chef there recommends all foodies to try their lamb shawarma, as it's a favorite among guests.

Habibi Express is open every day from 5pm to 12am. While you're there, how about a picture with the genie? ☺



Feeling parched? Grab refreshment by the side of the road!



(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Perfect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach (Near the Ling & Song Supermarket)



For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the casca-

bel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color. The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and

Unique fauna of Aruba

lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.

Prikichi

(parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in

a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

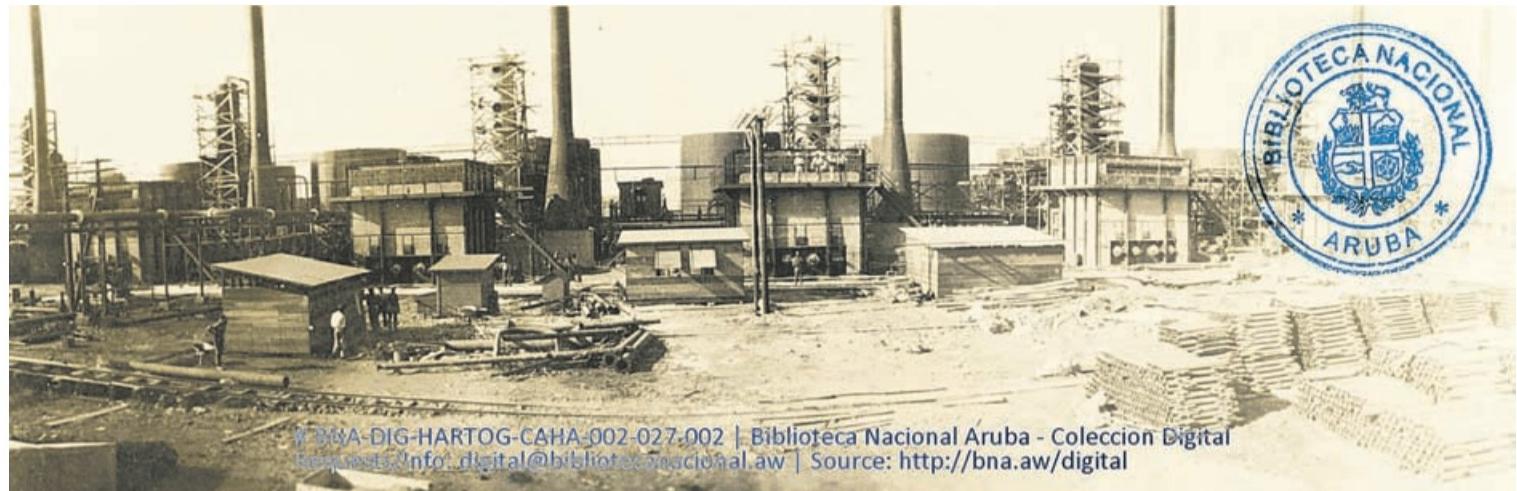
These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. For more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/> □



Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the time, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with



only one way to generate profit at the time for the subsistence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations were mostly experienced by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.

Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much

trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island in the mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piternella, as well as migrant authors José

Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness within the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamento,

but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/Dera Gai (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.□

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 42 Borders

1 Warren 43 Await

Beatty film 44 Glade

5 Concert grazer group

9 Stopwatch DOWN button 1 Caulk again

10 African lilies

12 Bone: Prefix

13 Tadpole, e.g.

14 Chinese food veggies

16 Quirk

17 Chow down

18 Showy bird

20 Winter showers

22 Bills in tills

23 Subject

25 River of Italy

28 Sights

32 Bar snacks

34 History stretch

35 Do something

36 Seaman's jacket

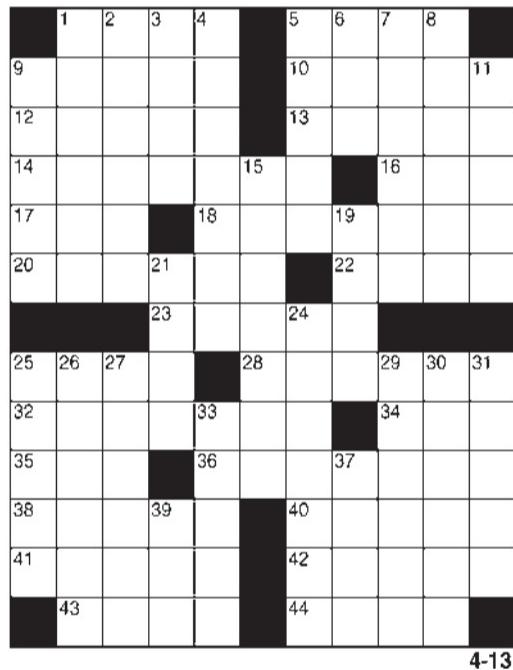
38 Way to go

40 Poem part

41 City of Italy



Yesterday's answer



A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-13 CRYPTOQUOTE

PEJ QD LCU RATU XFKDBD, MAU

X K B D . P E J Q D L C U R A T U

E S W D , M A U E S U . — E P E L Y E

X C F P E L , " W J P L I C F U W D

W A F U K L X "

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HE WHO KNOWS DOES NOT SPEAK. HE WHO SPEAKS DOES NOT KNOW — LAO TZU

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

1	4		6	5		9		
5						1		
3			7	4		6		
		5		6				
2	1	4		8		7		
1	2				3			
8		2			5			
		9				7		

Difficulty: ★★★★

11/1

Answer to previous puzzle

3	7	6	2	1	4	8	5	9
9	4	1	5	8	6	2	3	7
8	5	2	7	3	9	4	6	1
5	2	9	8	7	3	1	4	6
7	6	3	4	9	1	5	8	2
1	8	4	6	5	2	7	9	3
2	9	7	3	4	8	6	1	5
4	3	5	1	6	7	9	2	8
6	1	8	9	2	5	3	7	4

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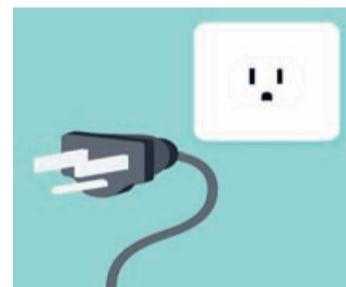
10/31

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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Climate change is making extreme downpours in Spain heavier and more likely, scientists say

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT
Associated Press

Human-caused climate change made Spain's rainfall about 12% heavier and doubled the likelihood of a storm as intense as this week's deluge of Valencia, according to a rapid but partial analysis Thursday by World Weather Attribution, a group of international scientists who study global warming's role in extreme weather.

Monstrous flash floods in Spain claimed at least 158 lives, with 155 deaths confirmed in the eastern Valencia region alone. An unknown number of people are still missing and more victims could be found. Crews searched for bodies in stranded cars and sodden buildings Thursday.

World Weather Attribution said climate change is the most likely explanation for extreme downpours in southern Spain, as a warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture, leading to heavier downpours. The group noted its analysis is not a full, detailed attribution study, as the scientists did not use climate models to simulate the event in a world without human-caused warming.

Scientists looked at historical observations of rainfall, which they say indicate that one-day bursts of rain in this region are increasing as emissions from the burning of fossil fuels warms the planet. "We haven't had time yet to do a full attribution study about the flooding that's just taken place in Spain. But what we have been able to do is to look at observations of rainfall in the area," said WWA expert Clair Barnes.



Flooded cars piled up are pictured in Valencia, Spain, Thursday, Oct. 31, 2024.

Associated Press

"And based on the recorded rainfall, we've estimated that similar events have become about 12% more intense, and probably about twice as likely as they would have been in a pre-industrial climate, about 1.3 degrees (Celsius) cooler, without human-caused climate change."

"I've heard people saying that this is the new normal," added Barnes, a statistician who researches extreme weather events and climate change at the Imperial College London. "Given that we are currently on track for 2.6 degrees of warming, or there-

abouts, within this century, we are only halfway to the new normal."

Since the mid-1800s, the world has already heated up by 1.3 degrees Celsius (2.3 degrees Fahrenheit), up from previous estimates of 1.1 or 1.2 degrees because it includes the record heat last year, according to the United Nations Environment Programme's annual Emissions Gap Report released last week.

The world is on pace to hit 3.1 degrees Celsius (5.6 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times. But if nations somehow do all of what they promised in tar-

gets they submitted to the U.N., that warming could be limited to 2.6 degrees Celsius (4.7 degrees Fahrenheit), the report said. □

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Editor

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Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @arubatoday



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Humbert knocks out Alcaraz to join Zverev and Tsitsipas in Paris Masters quarterfinals

By JEROME PUGMIRE

AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Frenchman Ugo Humbert harnessed the energy of the home crowd and produced one of his best career performances in beating Carlos Alcaraz 6-1, 3-6, 7-5 to reach the quarterfinals of the Paris Masters on Thursday.

A flurry of forehand and backhand winners had Alcaraz 5-0 down in a first set so one-sided that Alcaraz, a four-time Grand Slam winner ironically waved his racket and grinned to the crowd after holding in the sixth game.

"There were some incredible points, I think I have just experienced one of my greatest moments on a tennis court," Humbert said. "I don't want it to end here." The second-seeded Alcaraz controlled the second set but, after missing chances during the third set, served to stay in the match. The crowd jeered a replayed point but Alcaraz was unperturbed and held comfortably for 5-5.

Sensing a big upset, Humbert got the Bercy Arena crowd going in the next game.

The 26-year-old left-hander looked like he was about to do a lap of honor after a brilliant forehand pass down the line at full stretch and earned ovations following a superb angled volley and a booming win-



France's Ugo Humbert celebrates after defeating Spain's Carlos Alcaraz during their third round match at the Paris Masters tennis tournament at the Accor Arena, Thursday, Oct. 31, 2024 in Paris.

Associated Press

ner that flew past his Spanish opponent.

A rattled-looking Alcaraz trailed 0-30 in the 12th game. Umpire Richard Haigh intervened several times to calm down the crowd, urging them not to cheer when Alcaraz made a fault on serve and then said in English "Guys, you're affecting both players." Serving again to stay in the match at 15-40, Alcaraz saved one match point but returned long on the next as the 15th-seeded Humbert set up a last-eight contest with Australian Jordan Thompson.

Later Thursday, eighth-seeded Grigor Dimitrov needed to beat Arthur Rinderknech to have an

outside chance of reaching the season-ending ATP Finals. Dimitrov is in 10th race and must reach Sunday's final in Paris. The Bulgarian veteran was runner-up here last year to Novak Djokovic.

Earlier, Alexander Zverev won the serving battle and silenced the raucous home crowd, beating French prospect Arthur Fils 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

The third-seeded German compiled 16 aces compared to nine for the 20-year-old Fils in their first indoor meeting on a fast court suiting heavy servers with big forehands. He improved to 3-1 overall against Fils.

"I am happy I hung in

there today. It was a great match," Zverev said. "He is a great player and has improved a lot this year. I am looking forward to the next few battles we are going to have."

Zverev, the French Open runner-up, saved three break points in serving for the match at 5-3 with the crowd cheering hard for Fils.

"The atmosphere here is a lot louder than at Roland Garros," the 27-year-old Zverev said. "It feels the court is smaller and the crowd is on top of you. It is something we don't get a lot on tour but I love it."

He next plays 10th-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas in their 16th career meeting, with

Tsitsipas 10-5 up.

The big-serving Greek earlier rallied to beat Francisco Cerundolo 6-7 (1), 6-4, 6-2 to stay in contention to qualify for next month's Finals in Turin, the year-end tournament gathering the season's top eight players. Although Tsitsipas was typically strong on serve, hitting nine aces and saving all three break points, he was not as clinical on Cerundolo's serve and converted three of his 11 break-point chances.

In other third-round matches, ninth-seeded Alex De Minaur kept up his chances of reaching the Finals with a 5-7, 6-2, 6-3 victory against Britain's Jack Draper, the U.S. Open semifinalist, and 2022 champion Holger Rune edged out lucky loser Arthur Cazaux 3-6, 6-3, 6-4. Also, 2018 champion Karen Khachanov won 7-6 (5), 6-4 against Alexei Popyrin and Thompson advanced to the first Masters quarterfinal of his career by beating veteran Adrian Mannarino 7-5, 7-6 (5), saving two set points in the second set along the way.

"It's what we've been working towards, these big results at big tournaments," Thompson said. "It got a little bit squeaky at the end there, but I did well to turn it around."

Top-ranked Jannik Sinner pulled out of the Paris Masters as did the record seven-time champion Djokovic. □



Arkansas fullback Kyle Thompson holds his helmet while on the sideline during the first half of an NCAA college football game against Texas A&M, Sept. 28, 2024, in Arlington, Texas.

Associated Press

By EDDIE PELLS
AP National Writer

Coaches have been communicating with players

College helmet communications revealed to be vulnerable

through their helmets on unencrypted frequencies in games involving Power 5 teams this season, leading to the possibility that plays could be intercepted by unauthorized people using certain scanners.

The SEC acknowledged it was aware of the issue, first reported by The Athletic on Wednesday, and that it was in touch with other conferences and the helmet maker, GSC, about the issue. "We are not aware of any instances of the system

being compromised during games," the SEC said in a statement. "GSC has developed an update to resolve the issue and we have made our schools aware of their ability to update their systems at a time of their choosing."

The Big Ten told The Associated Press it has not had any issues related to the encryption problem.

The Athletic reported the vulnerability was discovered Sept. 28 in an SEC game between Texas

A&M and Arkansas, saying it was possible, but not easy, for frequencies to be accessed by unauthorized people using scanners.

The vulnerable communications are limited to the plays and instructions coaches relay to players via their helmets — usually a quarterback on offense and a linebacker on defense — by pressing a button to activate the system. Communications are cut off when the play clock reaches 15 seconds. □

World Series champion Dodgers have eye on back-to-back titles with Ohtani returning to mound in 2025

By BETH HARRIS

AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles Dodgers' first game of the season in South Korea was overshadowed afterward by Shohei Ohtani's interpreter hinting at his stealing from the Japanese superstar. Their last postgame was a beer and champagne-fueled celebration of the franchise's eighth World Series title.

In between came a multitude of injuries, especially to the rotation as well as Mookie Betts' broken hand and Freddie Freeman's sprained ankle, Ohtani's historic 50/50 feat, the franchise's 11th National League West title in 12 seasons, and compiling the best record in the majors.

Then came the playoffs, where the Dodgers proved a resilient bunch.

They trailed rival San Diego 2-1 in the National League Division Series and rallied to win in five games.

They were pushed to six games in the NL Championship Series by the New York Mets before advancing.

They were about to lose the World Series opener until Freeman delivered the first walk-off grand slam in Series history. They ran through eight pitchers to



Los Angeles Dodgers manager Dave Roberts celebrates their win against the New York Yankees in Game 5 to win the baseball World Series, Thursday, Oct. 31, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

eke out a 7-6 victory over the New York Yankees to close out the Series in five games.

"We just kept going. Even in the postseason, I don't think anyone had us picked. I don't think they had us picked to get out of the first series," manager Dave Roberts said. "For us to go out there and fight and scratch and claw and win 11 games in October, that's a credit to our guys."

Investing a billion dollars to acquire Ohtani and fellow Japanese player Yoshino-

bu Yamamoto last offseason certainly paid off, even if Ohtani's playoff performance didn't match what he did during the regular season when his offense carried the Dodgers.

Ohtani reached career highs in home runs, stolen bases and RBIs and is the favorite to win NL MVP honors. In the playoffs, he went 2 for 19 with no RBIs and had one single after partially dislocating his shoulder in Game 2 of the World Series. "What Shohei's done to our ball club, the Dodger fan

base domestically, globally, I just don't think you can quantify," Roberts said. "He was playing with one arm in the postseason. So most guys would probably tap out, but he was going to not be denied at playing and posting and being in the lineup."

The Dodgers made some key pickups at the July trade deadline, including pitchers Jack Flaherty — who was one of three healthy starters in the playoffs — and Michael Kopech as well as utilityman

Tommy Edman, whose offense in the NLCS earned him MVP honors. Ohtani's former interpreter is on his way to jail on bank and tax fraud charges when he's sentenced in December. Ohtani is going back to being a two-way sensation next year when he resumes pitching after he spent this season recovering from a second elbow surgery.

The Dodgers have eight players who became free agents when the World Series ended: Walker Buehler, Flaherty, Kiké Hernández, Teoscar Hernández, Daniel Hudson, Joe Kelly, Kevin Kiermaier and Blake Treinen.

Hudson announced his retirement after Wednesday night's victory, while Kiermaier had already said he planned to retire.

The Dodgers hold team options on Austin Barnes and Miguel Rojas for next season. Clayton Kershaw has a player option and has said he plans to be back after a toe injury kept him out of the playoffs.

But for now the celebration continues.

After winning a neutral-site World Series against Tampa Bay in 2020 and being denied a parade because of the coronavirus pandemic, the Dodgers have pent-up energy to burn. □

Bob Costas retiring from baseball play-by-play after 42 years

NEW YORK (AP) — After 42 seasons, Bob Costas is retiring from baseball play-by-play.

Costas had done games the past couple seasons for MLB Network and TBS Sports. His final games were the American League Division Series between the New York Yankees and Kansas City Royals.

Costas' contract with TBS expired at the end of the season, but his plans to retire from baseball play-by-play had been in the works for over a year.

The Athletic was the first to report on Costas' baseball play-by-play retirement.

Costas plans to address his decision at a future date.

Baseball has always been Costas' favorite sport. He called games on NBC from 1982-89 and again from 1994-2000. He was one of the announcers for the 1995 World Series and then the main play-by-play voice for the Fall Classic in 1997 and '99.

He joined TBS in 2021 to serve as studio host for its coverage of the National League Championship Series and then called games the past three seasons. TBS has had a package of Tuesday night regular-season games to go with its

postseason coverage since 2022.

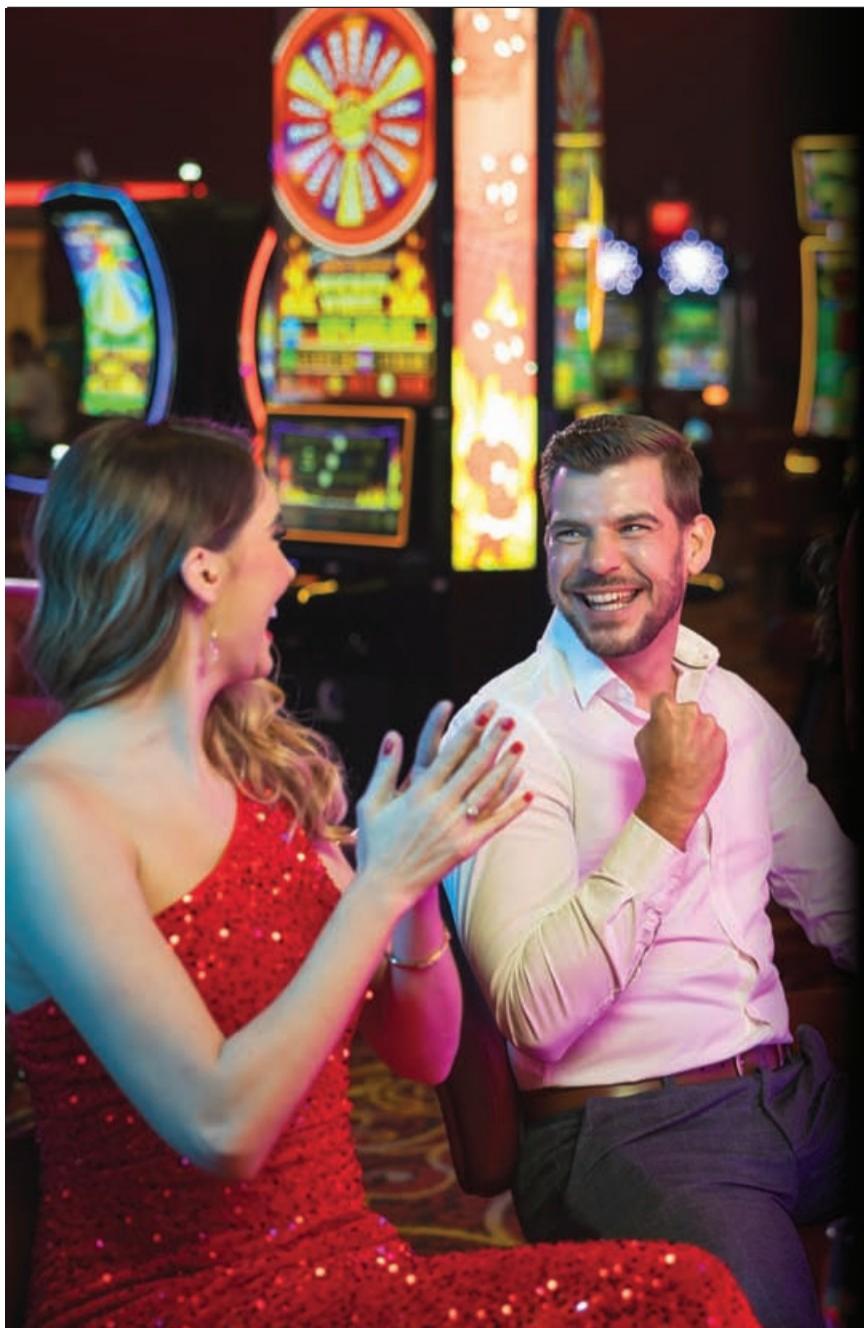
Costas had also done games on MLB Network since its start in 2009. He will continue to do some work for the network on key events, including the Baseball Hall of Fame announcement.

In 2018, he received the Ford C. Frick Award for broadcast excellence from the Baseball Hall of Fame. Costas is also known for being the prime-time host of NBC's Olympics coverage from 1992 to 2016. He also has made appearances as a commentator on sports issues on CNN. □



Bob Costas broadcasts from the field for Thursday Night Football before an NFL football game between the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Atlanta Falcons in Tampa, Fla., Thursday, Nov. 3, 2016.

Associated Press



THE CASINO AT
THE RITZ-CARLTON
ARUBA

WIN \$12,000

EVERY SATURDAY TILL NOVEMBER 16TH

Receive one (1) raffle ticket for every 300 points /\$150 theoretical win or with every \$150 check at Casa Nonna New York, BLT Steak or Divi Lounge.

WEEKLY PRIZES

6 WINNERS OF
\$1,000
CASH
9:00PM - 11:00PM

1 WINNER OF
\$1,500
CASH
11:30PM

9 WINNERS OF
\$500
SLOT CREDIT
11:00PM - 12:00AM

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba encourages Responsible Gaming.

The lucky winner will be revealed.

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba will select the lucky winner of the MERCEDES-BENZ G-CLASS 2024 on November 22nd!

Since April this year, The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba launched their mega campaign for 2024: The Mercedes-Benz G-Wagon 2024 Giveaway! The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba has been known for its thrilling giveaways like the Ferrari giveaway, Mega Win campaigns with the most attractive cash prizes, exotic vacations and many more. The day is finally near, on November 22nd they will select the lucky winner of the Mercedes-Benz G-Class 2024!

All visitors of The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba still have the opportunity to participate to win this amazing car by being or becoming a member of the VIP Club where they can enjoy unique benefits.

Players can earn raffle tickets till November 22nd at 9:30pm in order to participate.

Players can earn their raffle tickets as follows:

- Every 300 points on slot machines / \$150 of theoretical win on tables = 1 raffle ticket.
- Every check of \$150 at Casa Nonna New York, BLT Steak and Divi Lounge = 1 raffle ticket

There will be 50 finalists competing in the grand finale on November 22nd to be the lucky winner of the Mercedes-Benz G-Class 2024! There are four ways to become a finalist:

- Saturday Drawings till November 16th (with \$12,000 in prizes): selecting 31 finalists
- Golden Key on November 16th: selecting 2 finalists at 11:00pm
- Top Player's Race on November 21st: selecting 9 finalists at 10:00pm

- Last Chance Drawing on November 22nd: selecting 8 finalists from 5:00pm till 10:00pm

This campaign has gathered local and international attention as this is the second time that The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba raffles a high-end luxury car in the Caribbean region and gives their players the opportunity to win this unique car.

The Mercedes-Benz G-Class 2024 makes a striking visual statement for its bold black exterior and lavish red interior. Once inside, you will find all the Mercedes-Benz luxury hallmarks, including red leather comfort seats and Burmester surround system which consists of 15 loudspeakers. You will find everything that you are looking for in a car with this Luxury Wagon: refinement, comfort and performance of a turbo-charged V8 engine. This luxury vehicle offers an unique experience and one player will be the lucky winner on November 22nd.

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton, Aruba is very proud to bring this car to the island as it reflects the luxury and high quality of The Ritz-Carlton brand.

MEDIA RELEASE

The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton Aruba offers high quality service and offers a unique and memorable experience. For more participation details of the Luxury Wagon Campaign 2024, please visit the VIP Desk at The Casino at The Ritz-Carlton Aruba or contact 527-2276/ 527-2277 and they will be happy to assist you with further details on how to participate and WIN!